

15.

THE
Earl of Strafford's
LETTER
TO THE
KING,
TO
Pass the BILL occasioned by the Tumult of the
APPRENTICES.

Taken from the Original Copy.

May it please Your Majesty,
IT hath been my greatest Grief in all these Troubles, to be taken as a Person which should endeavour to represent and set things amiss between your Majesty and your People; and to give Councils tending to the Disquiet of your Three Kingdoms.

Most true it is, that this mine own private Condition, considered, it had been a great madnes, since through your Gracious Favour I was so provided, as not to expect in any kind to mind my Fortune, or please my mind more, than by resting where your Bounteous Hand had placed me.

Nay, it is most mightily mistaken; For unto your Majesty it is well known, my poor and humble Advices concluded still in this, That Your Majesty and Your People could never be happy till there were a right Understanding betwixt you and them; no other means to effect and settle this Happiness but by the Council, and Assent of the Parliament, or to prevent the Growing Evils upon this State, but by intirely putting your self in your last Resort upon the Loyalty and Good Affections of your *Englyſh* Subjects.

Yet such is my Misfortune, this Truth findeth little Credit, the contrary seemeth generally to be believed, and my self reputed as something of separation between you and your People, under a heavier Censure than which, I am perswaded, no Gentleman can suffer.

Now, I understand the Minds of Men are more incensed against me, notwithstanding Your Majesty hath declared, that in your Prince-ly Opinion I am not guilty of Treason, nor are you satisfied in your Conscience to pass the Bill.

This bringeth me into a very great strait; there is before me the Ruin of my Children and Family, hitherto untouched in all the Branches of it with any foul Crimes. Here is before me the many Ills which may befall Your Sacred Person and the whole Kingdom, should your

Self and the Parliament Part less satisfied one with the other than is necessary for the Preservation of King and People. Here are before me the things most valued, most feared by Mortal Men, Life or Death.

To say Sir, that there hath not been a Strife in me, were to make me less than God knoweth mine Infirmitie give me.

And to call Destruction upon my self and young Children, were the Intentions of my Heart (at least have been innocent of this great Offence) may be believed will find no easie Content to Flesh and Blood.

But with much Sadness I am come to a Resolution of that which I take to be the best becoming me, to look upon that which is most principal in it self, which doubtles is the Prosperity of your Sacred Person and the Commonwealth, infinitely before any mans private Interest.

And therefore in few words, as I put my self wholly upon the Honour and Justice of my Peers so clearly, as to beseech your Majesty might please to have spared that Declaration of yours on Saturday last, and intirely to have left me to their Lordships: so now to set your Majesties Conscience, &c. at liberty, I do most humbly beseech you, for the preventing of such Mischief as may happen by your Refusal to pass the Bill, by this means to remove (praised be God) I cannot say this accursed but (I confess) this unfortunate thing forth of the way, toward that Blessed Agreement, which God, I trust, shall for ever establish betwixt you and your Subjects.

Sir, my Consent herein, shall more acquit you to God, than all the World can do besides; to a willing mind there is no injury done, and as by God's Grace I forgive all the World, so Sir, I can give up the life of this World with all Cheerfulness imaginable, in the just acknowledgment of your exceeding Favour, and only beg that in your Goodness, you would vouchsafe to cast your Gracious Regard upon my poor Son and his Sisters, less or more, and no otherwise than their unfortunate Father shall appear more or less guilty of his Death. *God long Preserve Your Majesty.*

Your Majesties most Humble,

*Tower, May
4th. 1641.*

most Faithful Subject

and Servant,

Strafford.

Reader, you have here the Loyal and Unfortunate Earl of Strafford's Letter to the Late King, shortly you shall have some Occasional Reflections upon the same.

F I N I S,

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